

# THE LABOUR ORGANISER

No. 41

APRIL, 1924

Price 4d.

## OUT OF THE RUT

### IDEAS AND ACTIVITIES IN BRIEF

In our last issue appeared particulars of the Barrow-in-Furness scheme for a General Election Fund. One of the features of the scheme was the creation of machinery for collecting *weekly* sums, however small, even one farthing per week not being despised. Our readers will be interested to learn that at the present time this fund has reached an income of £18 10s. 0d. per week, and there is a possibility of even this amount growing. It is hoped to reach £1,000 per annum ere long. We congratulate the Organising Secretary, Mr. Bram Longstaffe, on the excellent issue of his endeavours.

The new leaflet entitled "More Power to the Labour Government" just issued by the headquarters of the Labour Party, is on fresh and attractive lines. The leaflet contains life-like photographs of the Labour Cabinet, and on the back the record of a month's work. There is a membership application form at the foot and also space on one side for the name and address of the local secretary. The leaflet is supplied at the rate of 15s. per thousand, or £1 per thousand with a name and address printed. We suppose that no Party will be able to buy sufficient of such leaflets to waste. Their best use would be for distribution at public meetings, where instructions should be given from the platform as to tearing off the foot of the leaflet and making application for membership.

One of the hardest ding-dong fights that we know of is that which has been waged by the Buckingham Labour Party in the Buckingham Division. This Division is situated in the heart of a particularly bad patch for Labour. In the surrounding area at the last election seats were either not fought at all or candidates risked their deposits, several losing them altogether. The returns, therefore, for Buckingham stand out in bold relief by proving what can be done by hard work in a specially difficult area. The Labour candidate is Mr. E. J. Pay, and the agent Mr.

R. W. Turner, both of whom are tireless workers—not to mention Mrs. Turner, who is a well-known woman speaker and J.P. In 1922 Labour polled 7,343 votes, in December last the poll had increased to 11,824—only 1,527 votes behind the winner. We gather that a fortnight's campaign has just ended, which consisted of 33 meetings, resulting in literature sales £5 8s. 0d., and collections £13 5s. 0d.; not a bad return for purely country meetings.

The Bootle Trades Council and Labour Party have launched a mammoth Derby Subscription Draw, the tickets for which will be circulated amongst the organisations affiliated to the Labour Party. The promoters are aiming for a circulation of at least 100,000 tickets, and are budgeting for a very substantial turnover. A commission is given to organisations assisting in the sale of the tickets. Several unique features of the draw are worth noticing. For instance the draw itself will be made by a member of the National League of the Blind; the whole of the accounts will be audited by an incorporated chartered accountant, while the sale of tickets will be helped by advertisements in the "Daily Herald," "New Leader" and other Labour papers, including the "Labour Organiser." The scheme is advertised on another page in this issue, and secretaries should write at once for particulars to Mr. Tom Garnett, Organising Secretary, 5, Thornton Avenue, Orrell, Bootle.

Political opponents in the Ilkeston Division of Derbyshire admit that the Labour M.P., Councillor G. H. Oliver, will "take some shifting." The Labour Party, in fact, in this busy Division give justice for this view by their many activities. Some of the Local Parties frequently undertake enterprises sufficient for a whole Division. We note that two of the Parties, i.e., the Ripley Local Party, and the Heanor Local Labour Party have been engaged recently with bazaars. The Heanor Labour Party event is taking place as

we write, but a brief report is to hand of the bazaar held at Ripley on March 29th, and from this it appears that although only a corner of the Division was concerned the Women's Section and the organisers, Mr. G. Draycott and Mr. H. Parkin, achieved a great success. It is probable that some £40 clear profit will result from the one day's affair—a most creditable performance so soon after the General Election. It should be noted that the proceeds of the bazaars were not for the purpose of paying off an election debt, but to build up reserves for future fighting.

While dealing with this Division we might add that we have before us as we write a copy of the circular convening the Annual Conference of the Party to be held on the 26th April. The circular is itself a businesslike document and contrasts strongly with a postcard announcement we have received from another Division summoning its annual meeting. And the contrast is the more marked because in the one Division there is failure all along the line and in Ilkeston there is success.

Many local officers of Labour Parties and Trades Councils will be glad to know that the Workers' Travel Association, Ltd., propose arranging direct agencies in different parts of the country on agreed terms whose business it will be to see to publicity, run the travel clubs and to receive bookings. There should be a number of places where these facilities could be afforded to members and enquirers without much trouble, while a little push should produce a useful source of revenue. We understand the Association does all the detailed work and provides the printing matter, which, by the way, is all effective and entertaining. In these days of travel the facilities mentioned should be a real service to very many in the Movement.

It is rather the exception than the rule in the Labour Party to issue invitations to Party meetings by poster. In the specimen which we reproduce below it will be noted that the usual difficulties of making such announcements by posters have been avoided. There is no doubt that an excellent advertisement is obtained where, in suitable places, such invitations as the one illustrated are given by poster or

window bill. The North Norfolk Division (Organiser, Mr. S. J. Gee) is in many respects leading the way in the organisation of agricultural constituencies.

### TAKE NOTICE.

## The Annual Meeting of the

## Local Labour Party

*Affiliated to the North Norfolk Divisional Labour Party.*

Will be held on.....192  
at p .m.

All Members, both Men and Women  
are earnestly invited to attend.  
(Show your Yellow Membership Ticket  
at the door.)

Members' subscriptions are now due.

Men, a minimum of 1s. per year.

Women, a minimum of 6d. per year.  
and should be paid immediately to—

Mr.....

*(The Secretary of the Local Labour  
Party.)*

### ORGANISE FOR THE GREAT FIGHTS AHEAD.

Many organisers and secretaries have experienced difficulty in obtaining additional polling stations. To Mr. H. N. St. Dunstan White, of Spalding, belongs the credit of instituting a fresh weapon of persuasion against unwilling or hostile county officials and caucuses. In the Spalding Division, when the County Committee, on whom Mr. White had waited, urged that the expense of fresh polling stations would be too great, the Labour organiser got his way by pointing out that if the additional stations were not granted he would assuredly go out and get the 30 signatures required, and send them to the Secretary of State, who would cause an enquiry and charge it up to the county! It was a matter of arithmetic for them to decide which was cheapest—the enquiry or the polling stations, with possibly *both* expenses to pay in the long run. Other people, please copy!



In the current issue of the Gloucester *Labour Observer* (which we note is now issued in a new form under the editorship of M. P. Price, M.A.) there appears a continuation of certain records of the work of the agent at Ruskin Hall—the headquarters of the Gloucester Labour Party. The records given are not the customary ones relating to ward work and so forth, but have reference solely to that additional burden, which so often falls on local officers, of giving advice and help to the needy and distressed in all sorts of technical and quasi-legal difficulties. This month's issue gives a record of cases numbered 519 to 537, and these relate to Army pensions, unemployment pay, benefits society pay, and several other similar matters. Such a record would, we think, be beneficial if copied by others who are in the habit of giving advice on these matters and whose tremendous service in this direction rarely sees the light. Among the interesting cases given is that of a man who accepted threepence for conveying a parcel to the station and was promptly stopped 3s. 8d. by the Labour Exchange! The matter was put right on the intervention of "Ruskin Hall."

By the way, it is the fashion just now in Labour circles to speak flatteringly of Labour Exchanges, but we are afraid that there are many among our readers whose knowledge of these places is first hand, who do not share in the encomiums. Even the Poor Law to-day seems to be administered in a more humane spirit than the Labour Exchanges, and customarily with greater civility. One of the happiest things a Labour Minister could do would be to teach courtesy to the long-haired young men behind the counters in many Labour Exchanges, and to instil respect amongst them for the worker down on his luck.

In view of the worth of local Labour newspapers, however small, the following figures relating to the "Colchester Times," will be read with interest. The paper is brightly edited by Mr. P. F. Pollard, and though consisting only of a quarto fly sheet, it suffices to do a definite amount of sound propaganda work each month, to give encouragement and news to the Party itself, to give a diary of future events for two months ahead, and to return, with advertisements, a fairly sub-

stantial sum. The number of copies issued per month has varied. The cost of printing 1,000 is stated to be £3 5s. 0d., and 2,000 £4. Where a six-page number is issued the cost is heavier, but so far such additional cost has been met with extra revenue from advertisements. Last month's issues of 2,000 copies cost £4 and produced £2 6s. 0d. by way of advertisements. One copy was sent to each individual member of the Party, this accounting for nearly 1,400 copies (this figure is surely one that will be envied in many places). Of the 600 remaining copies these were either sold or distributed in working-class areas. Up to date four numbers of the "Colchester Times" have been issued, and there has been no loss. The paper has, however, done a tremendous work of propaganda, and on the credit side could be added the free publicity secured for meetings and social functions. Taking these matters into consideration, the "Colchester Times" should be voted an unqualified success, and credit is due to all those connected with it.

## Volume III. (1923) OF The Labour Organiser

A few Bound Copies  
of our 1923 issue are  
still on hand.

**Price 9/6**

Complete in attractive  
dark red binding (let-  
tered), with title page  
and full index.

**THE SAFEST & SOUNDEST  
GUIDE FOR  
LABOUR PARTY OFFICERS**

Editor-Manager:  
H. Drinkwater, Whittington, near Worcester

## THE SECRETARY'S PAGE

### HELP AND HINTS IN SEASON

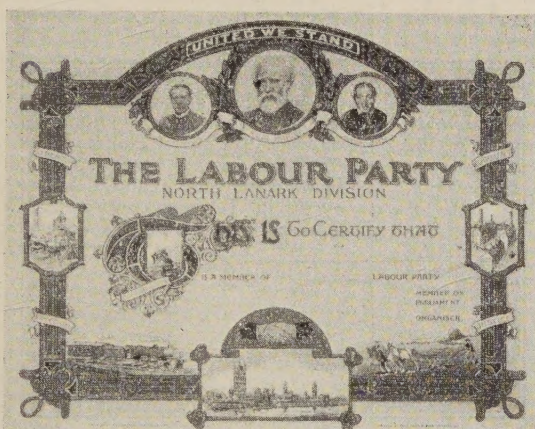
The engagement by the Labour Party of a staff, although small, of experienced propagandists for the purpose of touring the country and spreading the Labour gospel in difficult places, has been one of the most welcome and beneficial activities introduced in recent years. At the same time it is questionable whether the fullest value is being obtained for the work of the present propagandists in the constituencies, and this matter is largely one for the local secretaries. In the first place it can be said that the Party propagandists are all thoroughly experienced and qualified speakers, whose knowledge of Labour policy and both national and international questions is in some respects unique. They have also a special knowledge, through the nature of their work, of the towns and townspeople, and village folk of this country, of local psychologies, dialects and differences, not to mention the peculiar knowledge gained of the personality and make-up of our own Movement. The present scheme by which the services of these gentlemen is utilised, gives a constituency five days service in any one week, and generally ample notice of the visit. Both the salary and the expenses, with the exception of a trifling amount for local travel, are paid out of headquarters funds, and the loan therefore of a propagandist's services is in substance, a very substantial donation from headquarters to local funds.

In the face of the above facts it is surely expedient, if not obligatory, for the Local Party to take the fullest advantage of their opportunities. Most Parties will do this to the extent of fixing up all the meetings possible, and there the sense of obligation seems to end. Our object in penning this paragraph is to indicate what a lot more remains to be done. We have referred to the unique experience of the propagandists. It is poor play to bring these gentlemen into a constituency and to take no steps, or very little steps, to advertise their tour. We are afraid that sometimes the full value of the Party gift is not appreciated, and what is given freely is appreciated less

than if a substantial charge had been made. What is wanted is the exercise of the art of advertisement by the local people responsible. This does not necessarily involve expensive announcements and lavish printing. A propagandist's visit should be associated with some special notion of a week's mission, whereby the revivalist feelings which so many possess may be excited; it helps in advertisement itself. Nor is it difficult in many places to secure a little advance notice in the newspapers; some personal information can be easily obtained, or at the least a tip or two as to where the propagandist last was, or is going to next. A few facts readily obtained can be "written round," and even if local newspapers will do nothing the printing itself can be made more effective by adding such matter. A further suggestion which will help the next place as well as helping the week's work is that reports should be obtained. There is a real deficiency here, and a little secretarial work could easily make it up. Why not report a line to the "Daily Herald" and the local newspapers?

A propagandist's visit should be made an occasion for a great sale of literature. This is another weak point, and in spite of the abundant literary output of Labour headquarters, meetings, in which the Labour Party are paying the speaker and his expenses, are frequently held whereat no Party literature of any sort is on sale. This is downright unfair, and foolish. We believe that literature can be obtained on sale or return during the visits of a propagandist to a constituency. Propaganda which is to consist solely of the speaker's remarks without the added force of the printed word is very often propaganda wasted. The effort required to secure the literature and to sell it is so small that we really wonder that Parties so often forget it. If this should meet the eye, not only of secretaries, but of private Party members, questions should be raised at the next Party meeting as to whether or no literature is to be on sale when next the propagandist comes.





## LABOUR PARTY CERTIFICATE.

Reg. No. 696477.

Actual Size 11" x 14"

Lithographed in Gold and Five Colours, on a stout card suitable for framing.

The Design is standard, but wording and photographs will be altered to suit the requirements of any District or Division.

We have prepared this Certificate of Membership for use by the Labour Party, and invite District Officials to write for Sample Copy and Price List. The issue of this Certificate, while being Useful Propaganda, is at the same time a convenient and easy method of Raising Funds.

**DAVID WATT & SONS, Printers, DUNFERMLINE.**

*Send for Particulars and Specimen Copy—It costs you nothing and may be worth a lot.*

In several balance sheets that have reached us we have from time to time observed entries on the income side such as "Profits from —"; these items generally referring to some social effort or to demonstrations and meetings. We would suggest that unless a balance sheet account is rendered of the function referred to, this method of accounting is not satisfactory, and doesn't give the Party sufficient information or the full value of its activities. It is always more satisfactory to see a gross income account, and, after all, big figures command respect, and possess an advertising value. It will not be necessary on the outgoing side of a statement of accounts to give all the particulars relating to such items as we have quoted. The expenses may be given in a lump sum, providing, of course, that the details were to hand ready to be produced if questioned. As a matter of fact, many Parties' financial transactions to-day attain proportions which justify much more precise book-keeping than has been customary in past years, and the various funds and accounts which are opened

call for careful treasurership and book-keeping. It is a moot point as to who is the best officer to make up the books, and Parties with big transactions, and even those with small ones, would be well advised to consider the above, and several other book-keeping problems associated with their present activities, so as to bring their accounts into line with the best practice and their present status.

We have frequently been asked for advice as to the appointment of substitutes to attend Party meetings. In some Parties very definite rules exist upon this matter, but in other places custom has proceeded along diverse lines, and a variety of practices exist. Owing to the mere fact that our Party is a Labour Party and so large a proportion of its members have uncertain turns of duty, there has always been a very ready acceptance of the principle of permitting substitutes, and where the substitutes are known to be active members of the Party no great harm has resulted, and, in fact, a beneficial effect has been seen. Particularly in railway

centres the privilege of appointing substitutes has been a benefit, and there are mining and engineering areas, and other places where an extensive practice of appointing substitutes has arisen. In a delegate body such as the General Committee of a Local Labour Party or a Trades Council, substitutes ought to be confined to the membership of the affiliated organisation, which the person appointing the substitute represents. Some organisations appoint a panel of substitutes, while in other places rules exist defining this right and stipulating for 24 hours' notice of a substitute's attendance—not always a practicable thing.

A different set of circumstances arise, however, regarding the appointment of a substitute to an Executive Committee. Now delegates from affiliated bodies *do not represent their affiliated bodies on the Executive*; they represent the General Committee from which they have been elected, and in our opinion substitutes to the Executive should be drawn from the General Committee, and need not be members of the Association to which the delegate appointing a substitute belongs. Circumstances differ immensely in different towns, and the stage of development to which Parties have attained differs also, so that in this as in many other matters it is not always possible to lay down a hard and fast general rule; but in most places the business of the Party would be better if some decision was come to as to the rights of substitutes and the method of appointing them. It goes without saying that a substitute cannot hold office.

IS YOUR AGENT A MEMBER  
of the

## National Association of Labour Registration and Election Agents?

(Acts as the Trade Union  
for Labour Organisers)



General Secretary: H. DRINKWATER,  
Whittington, near Worcester.

### AGENTS' ASSOCIATION NEWS.

The annual dinner of the London Agents is to take place on 26th April, at the Chancery Hotel, Soho. A number of prominent guests are expected.

Lancashire and Cheshire Agents are to choose for their annual meeting between the Guest House, West Bradford, or for Clitheroe and Culcheth Hall, near Warrington. A two days' event in June is contemplated, thus converting the annual meeting into a "meet" of a more catholic order.

Mr. C. C. Jones, who has been appointed District Organiser to the South-Western area of the Labour Party, has for many years borne a close association with the public life of Smethwick, where he will be much missed. Mr. Harold Croft, who has been appointed to the Home Counties, has been agent at Croydon, and is Chairman of the London District of the Agents' Association. Mr. Croft has also been associated with the Midland area, where he formerly held several important offices in the I.L.P.

The Executive Committee of the Agents' Association met in London on the 27th March, afterwards interviewing the National Agent on several important matters. Reports are being given to members through the ordinary channels.

Mr. H. E. Rogers, Agent at Bristol East, has been appointed District Secretary of the S. Wales and South-Western District of the Agents' Association, vice Mr. Weatherby, who, after useful service has now resigned on temporarily (we hope) ceasing to be an agent.

Special interest attaches to the coming ballot of the N.U.R. for the selection of seven Parliamentary candidates. One of the nominees is Mr. Arthur J. Thatcher, now Labour Agent at Stockton-on-Tees and formerly at Gloucester, whose Labour activities on the North-East Coast, in S. Wales, and elsewhere is well-known. On the occasion of the last ballot, when ten candidates were selected, Mr. Thatcher came in eleventh and was nominated by 23 branches. No less than 143 branches have, however, subscribed to Mr. Thatcher's nomination this time, and his selection should therefore be assured. We wish him success.



# INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOLS

*Holidays with a Purpose*

## BELGIUM

A W.T.A. Summer School will be held at  
The Labour College  
BRUSSELS

(Ecole Ouvrière, Supérieure, Uccle.)

**L**ECTURES on Belgian Labour Movement, Belgian literature and art, social gatherings with Belgian workers, visits to Maison du Peuple, Brussels, and excursions.

The College is splendidly situated just outside Brussels, and is well equipped. The Co-operative International Exhibition at Ghent can also be visited from this school.

Parties leave London on Saturday, August 23, arriving at School same day. Period, fourteen days, London to London.

Inclusive Cost, £9 10s.

Extensions for Ostend, Brussels, Heyst-sur-mer can be arranged.

TERMS cover 3rd rail London-Dover, saloon boat, 2nd rail in Belgium, accommodation and food, lectures, leader, excursions, and gratuities.

*Bookings close August 1.*

## AUSTRIA

The International Federation of Trade Unions  
is organising a Summer School at

### VIENNA

#### SCHOENBRUNN

**T**HE W.T.A. is prepared to organise an English Party to leave London for this School on Saturday, July 19. Members must be mainly interested in the Labour Movement.

All arrangements for the School are in the hands of the I.F.T.U. and a detailed programme will be ready shortly.

The W.T.A. will quote an inclusive price for travel, accommodation, food, lectures, and excursions, or will arrange for independent travel.

Travel via Paris-Innsbruck route, 2nd class. Detailed programme and terms ready shortly. *Bookings close June 30.*

Attendance at summer schools on the Continent is one of the best methods for securing contact with Continental workers and a knowledge of their social, industrial, and political conditions and a sure means of creating an international mind.

*For full details send to—*

**WORKERS' TRAVEL ASSOCIATION LTD.**  
TOYNBEE HALL, 28 COMMERCIAL ST., LONDON, E.C.

## NEW APPOINTMENTS AND AGENCY CHANGES.

We are officially informed that the recent vacancies for District Organisers, have been filled by the promotion of Labour Agents as follows:—Home Counties Regional Area, Mr. Harold Croft (Croydon). South-Western Regional Area, Mr. C. C. Jones (Smethwick).

Mr. Allan Young, late of the Wrekin Division, has recently been appointed Central Agent to the Birmingham Borough Labour Party.

The following appointments have not been previously notified in the "Labour Organiser":—

Lancs : Liverpool, Edge Hill :

Mr. A. Griffin, Hayes Hall, 17 Shiel Road, Liverpool.

London : Camberwell, N.W. :

H. H. Champness, 74 Church Street, S.E. 5.

London : Greenwich :

J. H. Round, 10 Blackheath Hill, S.E. 10.

London : Hackney, South :

A. R. Palmer, 5 Pleasant Place, Bond Street, Vauxhall.

Somerset : Frome :

O. Lewis, Gwynfa, Timsbury, near Bath.

Wilts : Swindon :

J. J. Stonier, 93 Commercial Road, Swindon.

Yorks : Barkston Ash :

Wm. Moore, 7 Fairfax Avenue, Selby, Yorks.

Yorks : Sheffield, Park :

E. G. Rowlinson, 69 Dorothy Road, Hillsbro', Sheffield.

S. Wales : Llandaff-Barry :

L. J. Finch, 147 Woodland Road, Barry (part time).

We understand that the following agents have relinquished their duties:—Mr. J. H. Baum, of Leicester West, and Mr. J. Lavin, of Grays, Essex.

Among our small advertisements, will be found an announcement from Mr. E. Smith, of Birmingham, relating to medals and prizes. Secretaries will be glad to know where they may get these goods within the Movement. Mr. Smith also supplies badges of all kinds.

## THE ORGANISATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE.

The Executive Committee of the Labour Party has appointed a small committee to enquire into and report, as to what is being done by Local Labour Parties, in connection with young people. The committee is to submit proposals and suggestions after an examination of available facts and circumstances, and it is hoped that some valuable and definite scheme for the political education and organisation of young people, will be the outcome of their work.

Those who move in the constituencies appreciate how deficient is the Labour Party's work in the direction of attracting and educating the young workers from the period of leaving school till he or she attains manhood or womanhood. There is a great work yet to be done.

As a preliminary to the Committee's investigation, a questionnaire has been sent out to all Local Labour Parties, enquiring what has or is being done locally in this matter. The form is to be completed and returned to Dr. Marion Phillips, at the Labour Party headquarters. We sincerely hope that there will be a ready response to this questionnaire, and that even those who are unable to give any definite activity in their area will avail themselves of the opportunity for comments afforded by the questionnaire.

We can thoroughly recommend the coloured certificate of membership advertised on another page. Secretaries should send for samples immediately.

At Bristol recently, a local magistrate claimed and secured a Parliamentary vote in the Thornbury Division, because the bow-window of his house was built on the County side of the boundary, and, therefore, within the County Division. The Registration Officer, in allowing the vote, said bow-windows in country houses were sometimes quite spacious, and he knew of one in which there was a full-sized billiard table. Evidently, the law can be stretched a point where a rich man is concerned, though it is rarely very elastic in respect of a poor woman's "unfurnished" room.



To Agents and Secretaries. Are You Short of Funds?  
Do Your Members Desire to Win a Fortune for 2/6? If so

BOOTLE TRADES COUNCIL & LABOUR PARTY  
are prepared to assist you

# Mammoth "Derby" Labour Subscription Draw

TICKETS CIRCULATED AMONGST ORGANISATIONS  
AFFILIATED TO THE LABOUR PARTY ONLY.

Approximate Prize Value £8,500

*Write for Books of Ten Tickets*

TOM GARNETT, Organising Sec., 5 Thornton Avenue,  
Orrell, Bootle, Lancs.

## MR. T. W. GILLINDER'S LIBEL ACTION.

As we go to press we learn with considerable satisfaction that the libel action taken by Mr. T. W. Gillinder, the former Labour candidate at Ashton-under-Lyme (and recently at Sunderland) against Sir Walter de Frece, M.P., has resulted in a settlement by which Sir Walter expresses regret, completely withdraws all allegations, and gives a full apology, the other offenders following suit. A full indemnity is to be given for the costs incurred by the plaintiff, and an additional £75 toward any expenses he may have been put to of a personal nature.

Thus is one Tory lie nailed to the counter, and we hope that a wholesale example will be speedily made of some others among the hordes of Tory liars who infest the street corners at election times. The opportunity of making an example of a public figure like Sir Walter de Frece is not frequent, for our opponents do not usually repeat the ill-informed indecencies themselves, but engage leather-lunged tub-thum-

pers to do this dirty work for them at the street corners. We hope that the opportunity will shortly occur of correcting some of the latter type of fellows whose presence at an election is an offence and insult to every decent electioneer, and we trust too that the opportunity may occur of bringing home the responsibility for their utterances to the people who employ them.

We heartily congratulate Mr. Gillinder upon the service which he has rendered to the Movement and we trust that the libel action will not have left him out of pocket.

We take this opportunity of correcting a slip which occurred in the "Labour Organiser" for December last, where a protest was made against the forfeiture of Mr. Gillinder's deposit at Sunderland. Our report was taken from a daily newspaper, but it appears that though Mr. Gillinder and his Labour colleague did not either of them poll one-eighth of the total votes, there being two seats, the calculation was accordingly varied, and the deposit promptly returned.

## SOME REPORTS AND BALANCE SHEETS.

The Executive report of the Scottish Council of the Labour Party is of special interest this year, owing to the achievements of Labour in Scotland. There are now 66 Divisional Labour Parties in Scotland, and 150 Local Labour Parties, in addition to 200 Branches of the I.L.P., and several organisations of the smaller Socialist Societies. The Executive has issued a Parliamentary fund collecting card for the use of Divisional and Local Labour Parties. The Scottish Council, some time ago, also issued a model individual membership card bound in books of 20, duplicate numbered and purchaseable at sixpence per book. The Executive in their report draw attention to the absolute necessity for the recognition by all Trades Union officials, of their contractual duties to the local parties based upon national affiliation. In this matter our friends in Scotland place their finger upon a vital spot and we would like to see more movement along these lines calling for greater activity and greater loyalty from our industrial friends on whose work we have a right to rely.

The Dartford Divisional Labour Party annual balance sheet discloses a total income of £999 2s. 1d. On the income side we notice that the election fund realised £576 2s. 2d., somewhat short of the £636 18s. 11½d., which secured the re-election of Jack Mills to Parliament. It is interesting to see that when the election opened the sum in the coffers of the Party was less than £40, so that Dartford evidently justified itself in more ways than one. An interesting item on the income side is £122 11s. 0d., being profits from a "Christmas shoot," to which apparently all parts of the Division contributed handsomely by the sale of tickets. From the Executive report we notice that there are now six Women's Sections and that the individual membership totals 530. A suggestion is made to prevent leakage of members by the appointment of a collector on commission to collect contributions.

A distinguishing feature of the financial statement of the Aberavon Divisional Labour Party, is the number

of sources of income which are disclosed bringing in a total of £489 9s. 1d. for the year. Affiliation fees reached £117 7s. 3d., a Labour Fair at Port Talbot reaching nearly the same figure, i.e., £114 16s. 7d. There are 30 other items of receipt and the accounts appear to be in a thoroughly satisfactory condition. There are 109 affiliated Societies.

The Derby Labour Party, as becomes its standing in the Movement, issued an informative Year Book containing its Annual Report and accounts. The form of accounts is of particular interest and from this we extract the following summary:—

	Income.			Expenditure		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
General Fund ..	629	3	9	706	15	3
Election Fund ..	540	12	6	537	14	8
Development Fund ..	348	19	8	215	9	8½
Social Purposes Fund ..	106	7	9½	106	7	9½
Publicity Fund ..	75	0	0	75	0	0
	1700	3	8½	1641	7	5

From comparative summaries that are published in the year book we note that Derby has not yet recovered the position it held in 1920-21, when during the boom years it shared a great numerical prosperity with the Trades Unions, which as the latter have also found out was difficult to maintain in times of slump. There has been, however, a 30 per cent. increase this year in the number of ward members and a distinct steadying among the members affiliated, while the number of Societies affiliated is increased. The Parliamentary position has also been strengthened during the year by the capture of the second seat, and the election of Mr. W. R. Raynes to Parliament.

From the report of the Bristol East I.L.P., we gather an interesting record of work. The Registration periods resulted in over 250 additional voters being added to the list; 10,000 Labour Party Registration leaflets were distributed for this purpose, while during a



women's campaign a further 10,000 Labour Party leaflets, specially applicable to women, were distributed. Women's work embraced regular Monday afternoon meetings with good attendance and instructive speakers; a sale of work which realised £26; and a week's campaign resulting in fresh women's groups being established, and existing branches being strengthened. During the Christmas season, 1,000 children were entertained and provided with tea and parcels. Ward activity in Bristol East was fairly strongly marked and general social activity appear also to be increased. There is a wide field of other activities which we have not space to mention. Sufficient to say that all contributed to the splendid victory in December last, when Bristol East was won for Labour.

We beg to acknowledge the receipt of other Annual Reports this month as follows:—Peterborough Labour Party; Bootle District Trades Council and Labour Party; Spenny Moor Divisional Labour Party; and Long Eaton Labour Party.

## WORKERS' TRAVEL ASSOCIATION.

A number of *Labour Organiser* readers have from time to time, taken advantage of the trips and facilities arranged by the Workers' Travel Association Ltd. In this issue, appears an advertisement, wherein the announcements should be of special interest to our readers. We strongly advise, that before arranging for holidays this year, our friends should send to the Workers' Travel Association for full particulars of the very many facilities both for party and individual travel, which are afforded.

This year, a feature has also been made of holidays in London; the circulars and announcements relating to this matter, should prove of interest to hundreds of our readers.

Another of the Association activities in connection with Workers' Travel Clubs, which are self-governing bodies of an enjoyable and educational character, wherein workers combine to carry out the purposes for which the Association was formed—and incidentally to see the world.

## LAW AND PRACTICE.

*(Under this heading are found brief and chatty explanations of points of commoner interest concerning the Law and Practice of Elections. Readers are invited to suggest points for notice herein, but are reminded that suggestions made may not necessarily be dealt with in the next issue.—Ed.)*

### PERSONS WHO MUST NOT VOTE.

It is a strange fact, yet true, that a person may be "on the register" and incorrectly described there, though he may vote, while another person may be "on the register," properly described and yet be unable to vote. There is a further contradiction that one person may be wrongfully "on," and may vote, while another wrongfully "on" would run a pretty peril if he voted.

To take the first case mentioned, that of a person who is wrongly entered on the register: it seems to have been held that a vote may be given, and will be allowed, provided the inference is such that a mistake was made in the *description* and not in the *identity* of the voter. In other words it is necessary to establish the fact that the person desiring to vote is the person whom it was intended to vote and who was entitled to vote. Thus a person may be permitted to vote where an initial or second name was omitted or even added incorrectly; where a mistake was made in the Christian name, etc.

On the second point, the law, while it clearly establishes in some respects the conclusive character of the register, definitely prohibits certain persons from voting. Such persons, if they vote, may be punished, and it is an illegal practice to induce a prohibited person to vote. However, as mentioned above, it is not *every* person who is prohibited from voting who incurs a penalty; the prohibition must be *by statute*, and so the voting by a peer who is prohibited by common law, and not by statute, does not appear to be an offence.

The persons who are prohibited from voting by statute, and who incur penalties if they vote, are as follows:—

- (1) Any person who has already voted twice at a General Election.
- (2) Infants (male) i.e., those who are not 21 on polling day.

- (3) Women who have not attained the age of 30 years on polling day.
- (4) Persons (unpardoned) convicted of treason or felony whose term of punishment has not expired.
- (5) Persons guilty of illegal or corrupt practices, or illegal employment, payment, or hiring at an election, must not vote at that election. If they vote their votes are void.
- (6) Naval or military voters who have appointed proxies.
- (7) Persons incapacitated by reason of conviction or reported by the Election judges for offences at former elections. Incapacitated during the term of incapacity (7 or 5 years as the case may be).
- (8) Conscientious objectors as defined by, and during the period laid down by the R.P. Act, 1918.

In addition to the above prohibitions a Returning Officer must not vote in the constituency for which he is acting, except to exercise a casting vote.

Certain persons are incapacitated from voting at Parliamentary Elections though no penalty attaches to them if they vote. The Returning Officer may, however, refuse their vote. These persons are: (1) Peers as above mentioned; (2) Idiots; (3) Lunatics; (4) Drunkards. The vote of a lunatic given in a lucid interval is good, while the incapacity of a drunkard extends to his physical incapacity through intoxication at the time of his applying for a ballot paper. A drunken man may be legally refused a ballot paper.

*What you save in Cash  
you lose in Efficiency  
unless all the officers of  
your Party get the*

**Labour Organiser**

#### URGENT.

Copies of the January issue urgently wanted. Will any subscriber who has surplus copies on hand please be good enough to send same to the Editor? Full allowance will be given.

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

*Correspondents are required to give their full name and address, not, however, necessarily for publication. Replies from general correspondents cannot be given through the post. It is imperative that where a reply depends on a statement of fact (such, for instance, as qualification of an elector to be on the register), the fullest information should be given.*

### SHOULD EX-OFFICIO PARTY OFFICERS VOTE?

*Question.*—In further reference to your article in the Secretary's Page last month, dealing with the question of public representatives on Local Party Executives and General Committees, do you consider that such representatives, acting in an ex-officio capacity, should be able to vote?

*Answer.*—Our article last month showed that there were several questions arising out of the relationship of public representatives to the Local Party. While the article was not entirely committal, it will have been seen that we incline to the view that public representatives should be permitted to sit as ex-officio members on General Committees, but not on Executive Committees. We might carry this a step further by saying that such public representatives, as *ex-officio members of the General Committee*, should not have the right denied to them of election, through that channel, to the Executive. Arriving on the Executive Committee in that manner, they should certainly be permitted to vote. Their original position, however, on the General Committee is somewhat different. It is not, strictly speaking, proper for an ex-officio member to vote on any question, though he has the right to speak. On such a numerous body, however, as the General Committee it begins to look churlish if the public representatives are debarred from the exercise of votes in this way, and generally speaking we should advocate rules which gave them such privilege. If however, the foolish practice was pursued of allowing public representatives to sit on the Executive, without any representative capacity, we should certainly not advocate the use of a vote. We think the latter position is best avoided in the interests of democratic control.



## PUNISHMENT FOR NON-VOTERS.

*Question.*—A correspondent enquires "whether something cannot be done" to deal with the large proportion of people who say they will not vote at an election, and who refuse to exercise the voting obligations of citizenship. Our correspondent suggests that some "strong measures" should be taken to deal with these offenders.

*Answer.*—We are tempted to ask what would happen to the explanations of defeated candidates if our friend got his way and it was made a punishable offence not to vote at an election. After all the unpolled votes are generally big enough to explain away one's defeat. Add them to one's own vote and there you are—our side really is in the majority, but they didn't all vote! Isn't this the orthodox comment on defeat?

We do not know whether our correspondent has seen or heard of Fabian Tract No. 209, recently published, entitled "Compulsory Voting: What it is and how it works" by William A. Robson. Though quite a little pamphlet there is a good deal of useful information on the question raised. The author himself is, however, somewhat inconclusive. From the pamphlet, we gather that Belgium has made quite a success of compulsory voting and has reduced the abstention from 52 per cent. in 1892, to less than 6 per cent. in recent years.

On the other hand we read that "in Czecho-Slovakia compulsory voting became part of the constitutional system of the country from the beginning of its existence as a separate State. It applies to both municipal and general elections, and the penalties range from fines of 20 to 500 Czech crowns or imprisonment up to a period of one month. It is understood that the number of abstentions has hitherto been so large, that it has been impracticable, if not impossible, to enforce the law rigorously. At the last municipal election held in Prague, for example, according to an unofficial but reliable estimate, about 50,000 persons (out of 424,680) did not vote; and the Courts could not possibly deal with such an enormous mass of offenders."

## KEEPING ORDER AT ELECTION MEETINGS

A correspondent draws our attention to an opinion dealing with the above

question in Blackwell's "Law of Meetings" which is contrary to the generally accepted view expressed in election text-books. The extract from the book named, which by-the-way is edited by Randolph Glen, a well-known authority on public law, reads as follows:—

"Again, with a view to the preservation of order at political meetings, there is nothing to prevent an election agent from hiring a policeman off duty or a police reservist to preserve order at such meetings, provided he does not by his payment exceed the expenditure sanctioned by statute. Policemen actually on duty may not be so hired, though they may be called in 'to suppress an actual breach of the peace, or to take into custody any person charged by another with committing an offence of which the police can take legal cognizance.' (Metrop. Police Guide, 1916 ed., at p. 1194).

"The police would not be hired as members of the election agent's staff but to perform their proper duties as peace officers. They would appear not to be persons engaged or employed 'for the purpose of promoting or procuring the election of a candidate' within s. 17 (1) of the Corrupt and Illegal Practices Prevention Act, 1883. The payments might also be fairly regarded as part of 'the expenses of holding public meetings' in accordance with paragraph (5) of Part II. of the First Schedule to the Act."

It is with some diffidence that we demur to the view expressed by such an authority as the one quoted. We have, however, excellent authority for doing so. The weak point in Blackwell's appears to be an assumption that the policeman reservist or officer not on duty, is in some way a specially privileged person whose employment is less offensive to the statutes than that of anyone else. However, in the Ipswich Election Petition of 1886, the matter was clearly decided and the Court held that it was an illegal practice, and an illegal employment, to have paid men to keep order at meetings. The only colour we can find for the assumption made in Blackwell's is the following sentence, which occurs in

(Continued on page 20)

## SELECTING A CANDIDATE.

### THE RIGHT PROCEDURE AND SOME ADVICE THEREON.

Few incidents and few events are so vital in the life of a local Labour Party as the selection of a champion to fight its Parliamentary battle. There yet remain in Great Britain some 200 constituencies which have not yet tasted the joys of a Parliamentary election challenged by a Labour candidate. In most of these places the time will come when a candidate will be chosen, we hope in the near future, and the guidance given in this article will therefore be timely. In the remaining constituencies a huge proportion are still somewhat inexperienced in the proper methods of selection, and quite a large number have never selected candidates in the orthodox manner, but only by means of emergency procedure sanctioned only because of the urgency of a General Election already upon them. In practice even those constituencies which have selected candidates again and again for successive elections sometimes fail to observe some of the procedure expressly laid down for the purpose of securing a fair and democratic choice in which the initiative shall be open to every element in the Party.

The rules of the Labour Party relating to Parliamentary candidatures are as follows :—

“(a) The National Executive shall co-operate with the Local Labour Party in any constituency with a view to nominating a Labour candidate at any Parliamentary General or By-Election. Before any Parliamentary candidate can be regarded as finally adopted for a constituency as a candidate of the Labour Party, his candidature must be sanctioned by the National Executive.

“(b) Candidates approved by the National Executive shall appear before their constituencies under the designation of “Labour Candidate” only. At any General Election they shall include in their election addresses and give prominence in their campaigns to the issues for that election as defined by the National Executive from the General Party programme. If they are elected they shall act in harmony with the Constitution and Standing Orders of the Party in seeking to discharge the responsibilities established by Parliamentary practice.”

The above are rules actually embodied in the Constitution of the Labour Party. In addition to them certain rules are embodied in the Constitution laid down for the various kinds of Local Labour Parties. Such rules are binding upon all affiliated Local Parties, though like other rules in the model constitution they may be varied *after consultation with the National Executive Committee*. It is not likely, however, that these particular rules would be permitted any material alteration. We give below the rule as enacted in Set A. The underlying principles of the corresponding rules in each of the remaining sets are the same.

“The normal procedure with regard to a Parliamentary candidature will, when there is no special urgency, be as under :—

“(a) The desirability of contesting the constituency should first be considered by the Executive Committee, in consultation with the National Executive and the Party officers.

“(b) If it is thought expedient to contest the constituency, the matter should be, unless time does not permit, brought before the General Committee with a view to nominations being invited.

“(c) The representative of any affiliated organisation, or the individual sections, and also the Executive Committee itself, may nominate any person for consideration as Parliamentary candidate, subject (1) to having obtained such person's consent; (2) in the case of nomination on behalf of any organisation, to having obtained the sanction of the Executive Committee thereof.

“(d) The nominations so made shall be laid before a specially summoned meeting of the General Committee to determine which person, if any, shall be recommended to the National Executive for approval as the Labour candidate.

“(e) Where no nominations are made, or where time does not permit of formal procedure, the National Executive may take steps, in consultation with, and with the approval of, the Local Executive, to secure the nomination of a Parliamentary candidate where this is deemed advisable.”

It will be seen from the above that the first essential in selecting a candidate is consultation with the Party officers as to the desirability of contesting the seat. This provision is not for the



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purpose, as some suspicious members have sometimes thought, of consulting the interests of the other side or the expediency of injuring our enemies. As a matter of fact considerations concerning our opponents very rarely enter into the matter. There are, however, practical questions of finance and organisation to be considered and Party officers are sometimes able to advise where it would be desirable not to precipitate a selection but to proceed first with organisation, or even with financial schemes. Sometimes, too, there may be a tendency to hurry forward a selection meeting with disappointing results, where, had the advice of Party officers been properly sought, a hint might have been given of developments that might have led to nominations. Thus we have known of instances where a Union with quite a strong representation in a particular constituency has been in the act of selecting its candidates, but an ill-considered selection meeting has been called before such Union would be ready to nominate. Such a course has sometimes led to an unsatisfactory selection, or in other cases to no nominees at all being forthcoming.

In the case of divided boroughs the special rules there laid down provide for consultation with the Borough Executive. Here again, it is obvious that consultation with Party officers in the initial stages tends to smooth matters, while consultation with the

central body tends to secure a united fighting front and a common election policy within the borough boundaries.

Having followed the above procedure the next step is to summon the General Committee to consider the report of the Executive and to invite nominations. It is in this matter that many Parties slip, the Executive wrongly proceeding to summon a selection meeting at once. The object of appearing first before the General Committee with a report is to give every ventilation to the policy of fighting the seat, and to ensure ultimately that every section has had an opportunity to nominate. This initial meeting is of great moral value and while it might seem to encourage delay to those who would hasten onward, it, in fact, contributes very materially to that democratic atmosphere and enthusiastic spirit with which a selection ought finally to be launched. At this preliminary meeting a resolution should be passed declaring the expediency of fighting the seat and instructing the Executive to issue invitations to nominate. Then follows the quest for a candidate.

Finding a suitable candidate is generally the most difficult part of the procedure. Occasionally a candidate is in view, but unless emergency steps have been sanctioned by the Labour Party the full procedure must be gone through, and opportunity given to every eligible body to nominate.

It will be noted that the constitution of the Labour Party is silent as to who should bear the burden of the election contest. In law such liability falls upon the candidate, but time-honoured custom in our Party has given us two courses (1) a Union comes forward and contributes the election expenses, accepting responsibility for the contests, or (2) the liability is taken by the Divisional Labour Party itself, and the election expenses paid out of the funds raised. Sometimes the candidate himself is willing to pay his election expenses, though this is an exception.

This is not the place to discuss the expediency of either of the above methods. The material point is that many affiliated Trades Unions have panels of candidates which they are willing either to wholly or partly finance, and the object of inviting all affiliated trades Union branches to nominate is to give such branches an opportunity of getting in touch with their National Executives and securing permission to nominate.

Now the method by which a Trades Union contributes the whole of a candidates' election expenses is by no mean so universal as it was a few years ago. There is a distinct tendency to modify this procedure, and a number of Unions to-day do not find the whole of the election expenses, and their nominations are conditional upon certain terms being accepted by the Divisional Labour Party, and upon the latter accepting a proportion of the liability. It is, therefore, altogether wrong when, as we have seen in a recent case, Labour Parties lay down the stipulation in their circular that financial guarantees of the election expenses must be forthcoming with every nomination. It should be clearly understood that if a democratic selection is to be made every affiliated organisation must have a right to nominate and must have a right at the selection meeting to put forward any proposition of a financial nature concerning the expenses, or proposals of their candidate.

It should be observed that not only affiliated Trades Unions, but the Individual Sections and the Executive Committee itself may nominate a person for consideration as Parliamentary candidate. They may either make such nomination with a view to the Divisional Party accepting responsibility, or they may make the nomination

on behalf of some other body or a Trade Union, provided they have obtained the individual's consent, and the consent of the body or union concerned. This clause implies the liberty of either a section or the Executive Committee *to get into touch with other bodies* for the purpose of promoting the nomination; this is a quite legitimate custom.

Apart from the above procedure there are several points which sometimes give rise to differences, but which may be solved by the exercise of common-sense. Thus, when inviting nominations to be laid before a specially summoned meeting of the General Committee it is obvious that a time limit would be laid down and the date of the meeting considered. It is equally obvious that the period allowed must be such as to give ample opportunities for affiliated organisations to meet and, if they desire, to carry through internal negotiations with their Union. It is undemocratic to hurry through the remaining procedure if it is known that any organisation is seriously engaged in negotiations for a candidate, and that the granting of a little time may aid them. It is not, however, democratic to continually delay or postpone a selection meeting in the interests of one Union, whose own procedure has been unwarrantably delayed. Nor is it democratic when a selection meeting has been called and nominations properly placed before it to seek to postpone that meeting because it is thought by a section that not sufficient nominations have been forthcoming. The nominations received in accordance with the invitations should first be dealt with.

(To be continued.)

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## SOME LESSONS OF THE GENERAL ELECTION

By THE EDITOR.

### ARTICLE II.

I would now like to turn from general deductions to be drawn from the 1923 elections to observations based more particularly on the actual working of the election contests, and therefore of special importance to election agents and Party workers. I will take seriatim the different matters which seem to me to call for comment.

In the first place I was most struck at the last election by the extraordinary number of local election news sheets which were issued on behalf of our candidates. In this direction if we have not exactly found a new weapon we have certainly newly found how to make the best use of it.

Now I found that the best election sheets were those where some prior thought had been given to the problem not only of issue but of distribution. There were really two sorts of election sheets, those based upon the Labour News Service or the news sheet issued by the I.L.P. and those which were entirely locally produced. Election Committees and Local Parties which have given some thought as to how they will issue an election sheet, early realise how much work the matter involves. The election agent who has to issue such a paper at the last minute without any previous preparation deserves sympathy. He is not likely to do much more than issue the standardised papers as they are, unless he is prepared to neglect other pressing duties.

The election sheets based upon the standardised papers varied almost as much as the independent sheets did. In some cases, as with the independent papers, good fortune had sent a heaven-born editor to the aid of the agent, and we saw the national basis of the paper added to and improved by brightly written and well collected material interspersed with telling local stuff and election matter. At the other extreme there were papers where no attempt at local editorship was made, but the blank spaces of the national sheets were simply used for meeting announcements leaflet stuff, and a photo. In such cases as these it was almost always obvious that the paper was a last-hour thought,

or perhaps unexpected financial aid had made the thing unexpectedly possible. However, everything goes to prove that in the future it will pay well to carefully consider beforehand the scheme for a paper; to select, if possible, an editor, and also to consider the most effective means for distribution. Our electioneers, happily, need not be hampered by considerations of what injury our action in this direction may do to the circulations of sympathetic local newspapers.

One feature of the last election which must have struck many others besides myself was the extent to which our electioneers have at last got away from the pure orthodoxies, and have ceased to be mere copyists of the other side. There was a time when an election contest seemed to resolve itself into the mere automatic issue of (1) election address, (2) a poll card, (3) a packet of leaflets, plus some meetings and a door-to-door canvass. There was a woeful similarity and uniformity over it all and the principal difference between our methods and those of the other side was that we spent less and issued poorer stuff.

These things are changed; enterprise and originality now very often get play. The art or science of advertisement is better understood; publicity is considered as a scientific problem; and the heresies of yesterday have almost become the orthodoxies of to-day. Election agents are seeking for new and striking forms of issuing their appeals to the electorate. Better methods of expression are being sought. The printing art is being exploited to find the best, the cheapest, and most attractive, all in one. New forms of meetings are held, new ideas of canvassing have crept in, and the steady-going electorate of our fathers is compelled by new methods to hearken to a new gospel.

One of the most striking results of the election was Miss Margaret Bondfield's win at Northampton. In this case the orthodox distribution of the election address through the post, or door-to-door, went by the board, and instead, a striking autograph letter from the candidate (reproduced in the "Labour Organiser" for December, 1923) was sent to each elector. The election address was published in the election news sheet, which, by the way, was also admirably done, and ran to



several issues. In several other instances we noted similar departures, and mostly they were coupled with successful or creditable results.

In regard to canvassing there may have been contests that were won without canvassing, but I know very few where a real ding-dong fight was waged and won without it. It is perfectly true that our Party are by no means yet converted to the expediency or the ethics of door-to-door work, but each election seems to emphasise how suicidal it is for the Labour Party to stand on a high moral plane in this matter, when in most constituencies their very existence depends on door-step work. I have never heard a good case made out for neglect of canvassing, but the late election renewed my instances where omission of it meant the abandonment of ground to press influences and the unscrupulous reapers of our enemies.

In the majority of constituencies we appear to have finally done with the old assumption that there was but one method of canvassing, and that the method practised by Liberals and Tories. We now recognise that canvassing has several forms, or at any rate that the same end may be achieved by several methods. I do not propose to illustrate them here, for from time to time we have referred in the "Labour Organiser" to different methods of ascertaining the electors' inclinations, and of influencing him to our views. Suffice it to record the enlargement of our outlook and the adoption of better methods.

Each election since the war, and every by-election, has evidenced an increased use of motor cars by our opponents for the conveyance of voters to the poll, and for general purposes. In many cases our opponents have established at an election a most efficient communication and transit department, under the control of an experienced transit officer.

In few or practically no cases are we able to imitate this work on such a scale, and we must therefore register a distinct difference here between our methods of electioneering and those of our opponents. The use of motor cars for general electioneering purposes part from the conveyance of voters, has never been yet seriously challenged, and would stand little likelihood of enactment, so that we have to face for a

long time to come a considerable disparity of resources in this respect as between us and our opponents. We must face it boldly, although I personally do believe that equality would be nearer if judges gave a decision which common-sense would seem to demand, i.e., that even where a car is *lent* its running expenses should be charged against the election expenses.

I am afraid that in the majority of constituencies our transport facilities have been bad—worse than they need have been. This is accounted for by the fact of the lesser experience of our electioneers, their lack of grasp of distance and area, and their general inexperience in the use and running of motor cars. Where there is a full-time agent this question of transit should be thoroughly thought out beforehand, calculations and estimates made, and the whole matter planned so as to afford at least a passably adequate system of communication. The question is acute in county constituencies, and I think explains in some cases our lack of progress in those places.

I have one warning. I do not believe in the attempt which is sometimes urged upon us of seeking to obtain by illicit means a service of cars at election times for the conveyance of voters to the poll in order to compete with our opponents. Such a course is directly opposed to honest electioneering, and the interests of our own Party. Better far to do entirely without cars and to maintain the consistency of our objection to the use of them for such purposes, until the law can be altered to give equality as between a wealthy and a poor cause.

County constituencies remind one of the employment of sub-agents. I have seen many experiments in this direction, and am coming round to the firm conclusion that sub-agents should never be appointed at all under any circumstances whatever. The election agent undertakes a statutory office of great responsibility, involving not only a relationship to his own Party, where, after a period of semi-autocratic control he may have to face a storm of ill-informed criticism and unjust blame for what others have done, but at law he has to stand the racket of all the stupid actions and illegal and excessive expenditure of sub-agents, while, in a very large measure, they themselves

escape the consequences of their actions. To take one instance: An election agent incurs a very heavy penalty unless he observes the date of his election return, but the sub-agents who are permitted to be employed and who possess practically the same powers as himself within their area, are under no penalties at all if they do not return their accounts to the agent in time for his return. Qualified and experienced agents have been known when employed as sub-agents to abuse that office and to do things which they would suffer for were they the election agent. I have known them exceed expenditure and exceed instructions and do all manner of foolish things, which, in the interests of peace and expediency the election agent has tried to cover up. Had he not given them powers of agency his course would have been clearer. I know that the resolve is deeply made in some men's minds never to again employ a sub-agent.

In the case of inexperienced election agents it is even worse if they employ sub-agents, for if the chief himself is lacking in knowledge what can be expected of subordinates? There is a further point that many of our workers and fresh recruits have in the past been accustomed to the methods of the orthodox Parties. In the Labour Party we try to teach purer electioneering; this result cannot be obtained if on the first occasion we put past delinquents into the power of committing the same errors and excesses at our expense!

Punch's historic advice to those about to marry is appropriate yet in some matters. It was—"Don't."

(To be continued)

*(The above article is based on an address given by the Editor of the "Labour Organiser" to a meeting of agents.)*

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*(Concluded from page 13)*

the judgment quoted. "If a man were so obnoxious to his fellows that they could not resist the desire to fall upon him and do him an injury whenever they met him, even if it were at a public meeting at which they would otherwise have behaved themselves in an orderly manner, he would not be guilty of an illegal practice if he were to pay a man to protect him." This be it noted, is a very different proposition to that of employing a policeman reservist, or anyone else, for the purpose of keeping order at meetings. Altogether, we prefer to take the authority of the several learned writers who have expressed themselves in accordance with the views above in all the works specially dealing with Election Law.